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**DARK
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COMICS**
KNIGHTS OF THE
OLD REPUBLIC

42 \$2.99

**STAR
WARS**

MILLER
CHAN
ATTIEN



KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC

MALAK UNLEASHED!



STAR WARS®

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KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC

"MASKS"

Zayne Carrick believes he has left the Mandalorians and their war far behind. The setback for the armored nomads at Jebble has briefly made the Core Worlds a peaceful place for a former Padawan to find fortune as a freelance adventurer.

But the Jedi Knight now known as Malak never abandons his drive to get the Jedi to enter the war—an effort expressly forbidden by the High Council. Nor does he give up his quest to convince Zayne's fierce and beautiful ally, Jarael, to join the crusade at his side.

But much has changed since their last meeting. Rohlan, the Mandalorian deserter, has discovered Jarael's latent Force powers. And Zayne has learned something Jarael never wanted anyone to know: her past association with the slaver gang known as the Crucible. Not as a slave—but as a slaver . . .



THE OLD REPUBLIC
(25,000–1,000 YEARS
BEFORE THE BATTLE OF YAVIN)

The Old Republic was the legendary government that united a galaxy under the rule of the Senate. In this era, the Jedi are numerous, and serve as guardians of peace and justice. The Tales of the Jedi comics series takes place in this era, chronicling the immense wars fought by the Jedi of old, and the ancient Sith.

The events in this story take place approximately 3,963 years before the Battle of Yavin.

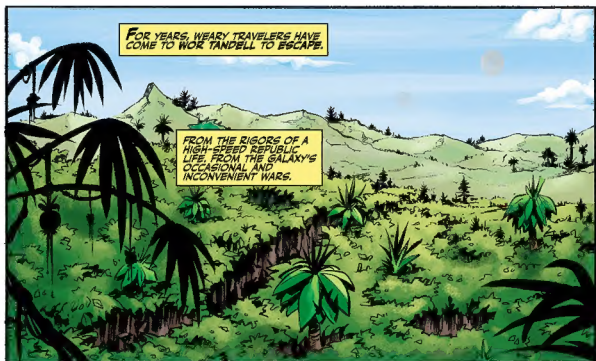
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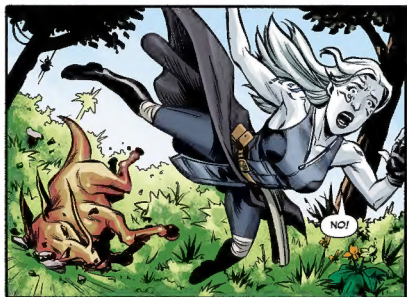
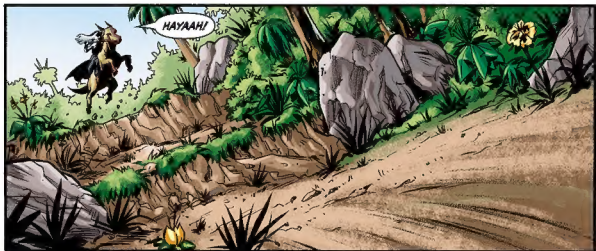
SPECIAL THANKS TO ELAINE MEDERER, JANN MOORHEAD, DAVID ANDERMAN, LELAND CHEE, SUE ROSTONI, AND CAROL ROEDER AT LUCAS LICENSING.

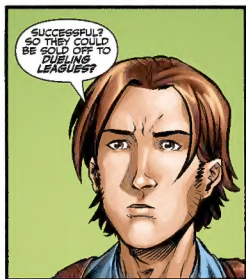
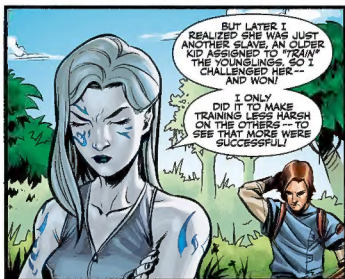
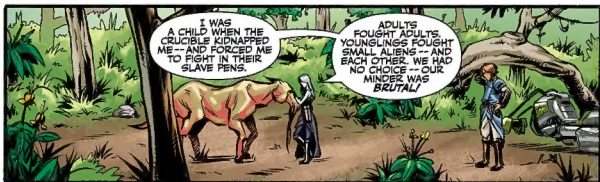
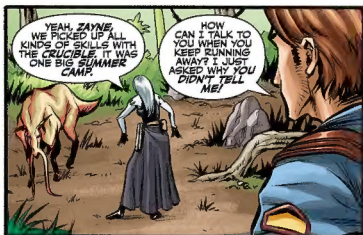
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IT WAS BETTER THAN FAILING! THE CRUCIBLE KEPT SOME AS SPARRING PARTNERS -- BUT THEY HAD OTHER CUSTOMERS FOR THE REST.

COMET MINERS. CORRUPT MEDICAL RESEARCHERS. PEOPLE WHO NEEDED ORGANICS WITH NO PAST -- AND NO FUTURE.



I TRIED TO HELP THEM. BUT I WAS JUST A TEENAGER. I COULDN'T. AND JUST WHEN I COULDN'T TAKE IT ANY MORE --

-- I MET CAMPER. HE HELPED ME ESCAPE -- AND HIDE, UNTIL YOU CAME ALONG.

AND RUINED EVERYTHING. I REMEMBER.



WHEN NO ONE RECOGNIZED MY TATTOOS, I'D HOPED THE CRUCIBLE HAD GONE AWAY. BUT ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, I'M MARKED.

FUNNY -- MALAK WANTED ME FOR HIS CRUSADE AGAINST THE MANDALORIANS. BUT WOULD HE, IF THE JEDI KNEW WHAT I WAS?



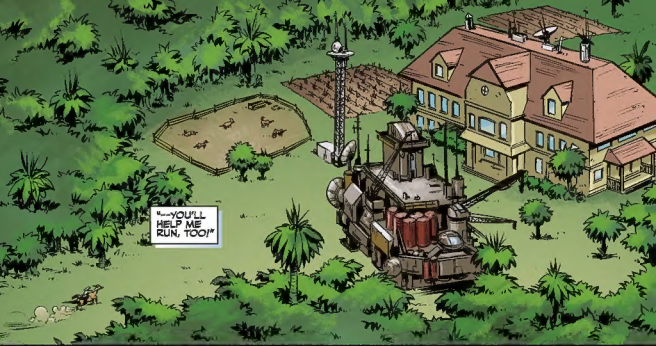
SO YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE LIKE A GHOST? YOU'VE GOT FRIENDS, JARAEI. TRUST US! TOGETHER, WE CAN DO WHAT YOU COULDN'T DO ALONE!



WHAT, STOP THE CRUCIBLE? THEY'RE SERIOUS BUSINESS, ZAYNE. THIS LITTLE CIRCUS ACT YOU AND GRYTH HAVE GOT IS FUN, BUT --

NO, ZAYNE. I'M GOING BACK TO THE SHIP. GO OFF TO TOWN AND HAVE YOUR FUN, AND THEN -- WE MOVE ON. LIKE ALWAYS.

I HELPED YOU RUN. IF YOU CARE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO ME --



---YOU'LL
HELP ME
RUN, TOO?*



I'M BACK,
SLYSS! PLEASE
THANK YOUR FRIEND
AT THE PLANTATION
FOR THE USE OF
THE --

SLYSS?!
HEY, I KNOW I'VE
LOST SOME HAIR
SINCE WE MET,
JARAE! --



-- BUT
I'M NOT
THAT FAR
GONE!

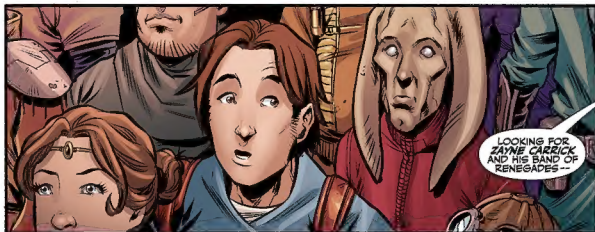
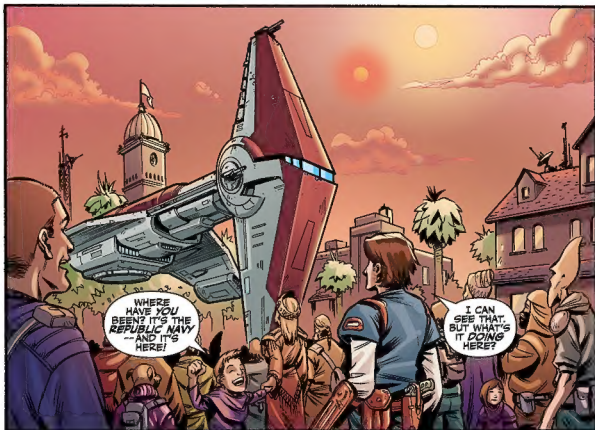
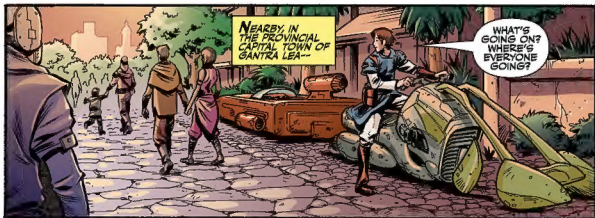
MALAKI!



WHA --
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?
NOW?

EVERYTHING
HAS CHANGED, JARAE!
EVERYTHING --

-- EXCEPT
YOU. AND
YOU'RE WHY
I'M HERE!

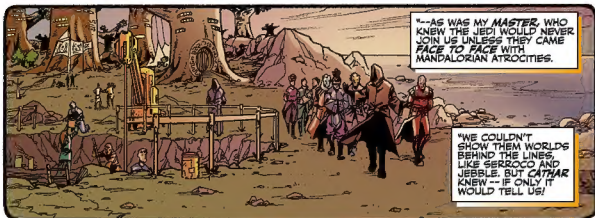






"--CATHAR. WHEN I RETURNED, A DOZEN YEARS AGO, MY PEOPLE HAD SIMPLY **VANISHED**. ALL OF THEM. ONLY THE BUILDINGS REMAINED. THE REPUBLIC ASSUMED A MASS MIGRATION DUE TO DISEASE--

"--BUT OFFWORLD, OTHER CATHAR REFUGEES TOLD ME FRAGMENTED TALES OF HARASSMENT BY THE MANDALORIANS, WHO'D HATED US SINCE THE SITH WAR. I WAS CERTAIN THE MANDALORIANS WERE RESPONSIBLE --



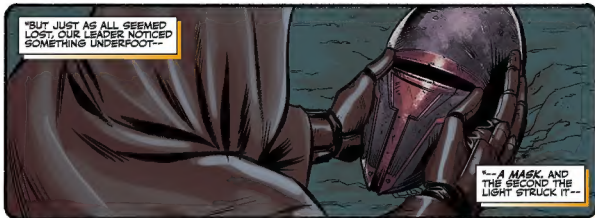
"--AS WAS MY MASTER, WHO KNEW THE JEDI WOULD NEVER JOIN US UNLESS THEY CAME **FACE TO FACE** WITH MANDALORIAN ATROCITIES.

"WE COULDN'T SHOW THEM WORLDS BEHIND THE LINES, LIKE SERROCO AND JEBBLE. BUT CATHAR KNEW -- IF ONLY IT WOULD TELL US!



"BUT TIME RAN OUT. SOON AFTER MALAK RETURNED, THE **JEDI MASTERS** CAME. THEY SAID THERE WAS NOTHING **SPECIAL** ABOUT THE MANDALORIANS--

"--NOTHING WARRANTING JEDI AID IN ANOTHER WAR. WE WERE TO **ABANDON** OUR EFFORTS AND DISPERSE, FOREVER.

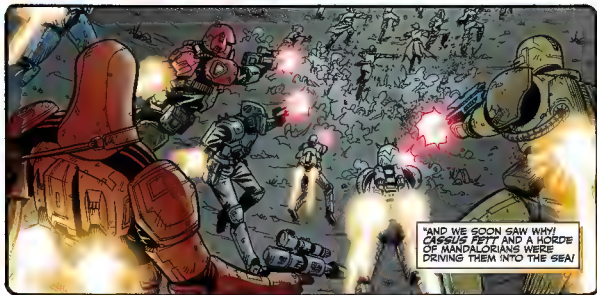


"BUT JUST AS ALL SEEMED LOST, OUR LEADER NOTICED SOMETHING UNDERFOOT--

--A MASK, AND THE SECOND THE LIGHT STRUCK IT--



"...THE CATHAR WERE BACK! PEOPLE I LEFT BEHIND -- PEOPLE I NEVER MET -- CHARGED THE BEACH, RUNNING FOR THEIR LIVES!"



"AND WE SOON SAW WHY! CASSUS FETT AND A HORDE OF MANDALORIANS WERE DRIVING THEM INTO THE SEA!"



"WE SPRANG TO MY PEOPLE'S DEFENSE -- BUT OUR WEAPONS WERE USELESS!"

"BOTH THE ATTACKERS AND THE VICTIMS WERE PHANTOMS -- OR WE WERE!"

"IT WAS A JEDI
VISION OF EVENTS
FROM YEARS BEFORE
-- A VISION WE WERE
ALL NOW SHARING!

"WE YELLED AS
THE MANDALORIANS
WITHDREW, LEAVING
THE CATHAR IN THE
WATER. BUT NO ONE
HEARD! WE WERE
NEVER HERE--

"-- BUT PERHAPS
THEY WOULD LISTEN
TO SOMEONE WHO
WAS THERE. ONE OF
THEIR OWN, WHO
DARED TO SPEAK!"

CASSUS --
WAIT! THEY'RE
DEFEATED! WE
DON'T HAVE TO
DO THIS!

THE CATHAR
LEFT A STAIN OF
DISHONOR ON THE
MANDALORE. TODAY, I
WASH IT CLEAN IN THE
WATERS OF THEIR OWN
PRESUMPTION.

BUT
IF YOU TRULY
FEEL THEY NEED A
DEFENDER TO STAND
WITH THEM -- THEN
DO SO, WARRIOR. I
SALUTE YOU.
KS'SERINI!

"CATHAR -- THE PEOPLE AND
THE PLANET -- SCREAMED
AROUND US. AND THEN --



"--IT WAS OVER. WE WERE ALONE ON THE BEACH. BUT WE HAD SEEN WHAT THE CATHAR HAD SEEN --"

"--AND WE HAD FELT WHAT THEY HAD FELT. UNSPEAKABLE CRUELTY. PAIN. THE DEATH OF A SPECIES, BOILED AWAY IN THE SEA."



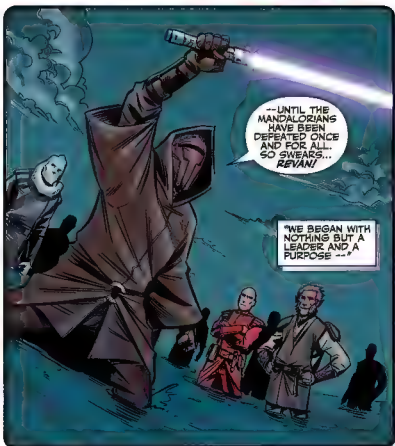
"FETT ONLY INTENDED TO LEAVE EMPTY BUILDINGS TO ATTEST TO THE EXISTENCE OF THE CATHAR. BUT HE FORGOT THERE WAS ANOTHER TESTAMENT."

THEY WERE BRATEN! YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO DO IT!

ONE OF YOU KNEW, BUT YOU DIDN'T LISTEN!

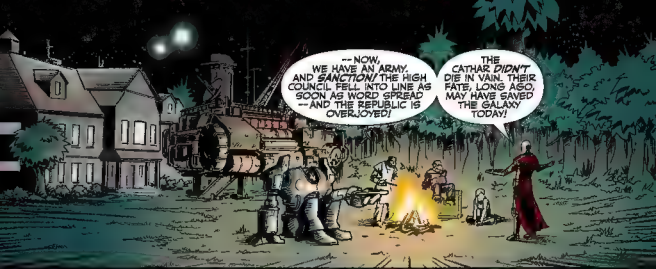


I DON'T KNOW YOUR NAME -- BUT I TAKE UP YOUR CAUSE. I WILL NOT REMOVE YOUR MASK UNTIL THERE IS JUSTICE --



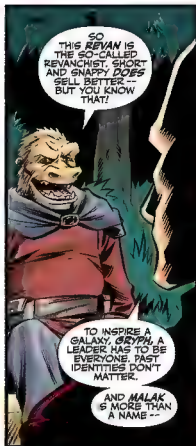
--UNTIL THE MANDALORIANS HAVE BEEN DEFEATED ONCE AND FOR ALL... SO SWEARS... REVAN!

"WE BEGAN WITH NOTHING BUT A LEADER AND A PURPOSE --"



--NOW,
WE HAVE AN ARMY.
AND SANCTION! THE HIGH
COUNCIL FELL INTO LINE AS
SOON AS WORD SPREAD
--AND THE REPUBLIC IS
OVERJOYED!

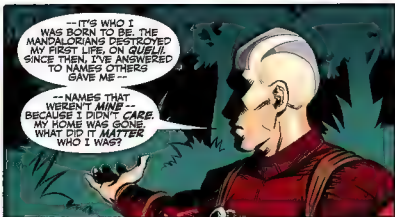
THE
CATHAR DIDN'T
DIE IN VAIN. THEIR
FATE, LONG AGO,
MAY HAVE SAVED
THE GALAXY
TODAY!



SO
THIS REYAN IS
THE SO-CALLED
REVANCHIST, SHORT
AND SNAPPY. DOES
SELL BETTER --
BUT YOU KNOW
THAT!

TO INSPIRE A
GALAXY, GRYPA, A
LEADER HAS TO BE
EVERYONE. PAST
IDENTITIES DON'T
MATTER.

AND MALAK
IS MORE THAN
A NAME --



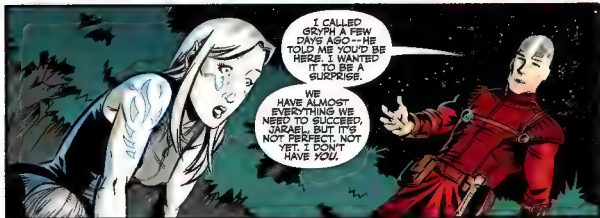
--IT'S WHO I
WAS BORN TO BE. THE
MANDALORIANS DESTROYED
MY FIRST LIFE, ON QUELII.
SINCE THEN, I'VE ANSWERED
TO NAMES OTHERS
GAVE ME --

-- NAMES THAT
WEREN'T MINE --
BECAUSE I DIDN'T CARE.
MY HOME WAS GONE.
WHAT DID IT MATTER
WHO I WAS?



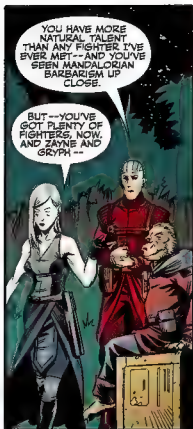
BUT IT DOES
MATTER. THERE'S
NOBODY LEFT WHO
REMEMBERS WHO I
WAS BEFORE. BUT
THEY'LL REMEMBER
MALAK.

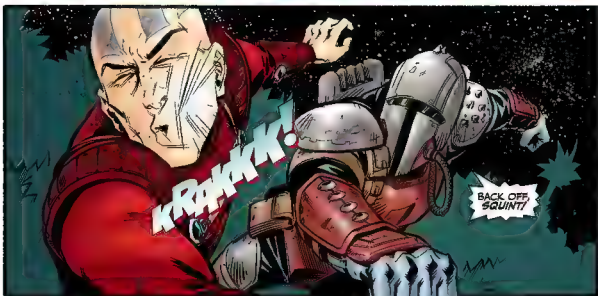
I'LL
MAKE SURE
OF THAT.



I CALLED
GRYPH A FEW
DAYS AGO -- HE
TOLD ME YOU'D BE
HERE. I WANTED
IT TO BE A
SURPRISE.

WE
HAVE ALMOST
EVERYTHING WE
NEED TO SUCCEED.
JARAEI, BUT IT'S
NOT PERFECT. NOT
YET. I DON'T
HAVE YOU.









IS THAT YOUR
CAMP, CARRICK?
WHAT'S GOING ON
DOWN THERE?

I'M
AFRAID TO
ASK...



STOP!
ROHLAN
IS OUR
FRIEND!

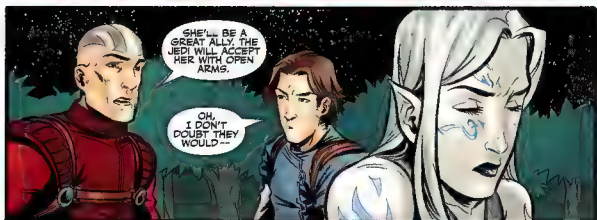
THEY'RE
NOT CAPABLE OF
FRIENDSHIP, JARAE!
ONLY TORTURE -- AND
GENOCIDE! LIKE
CASSIUS FETT -- AND
DENAGOL!

IF YOU'D
BEEN ON
CATHAR, YOU'D
KNOW!



UNNNHH!









SOON.

CARRICK--
I THANK YOU.
IF --



--IF
HE HAD
TAKEN
HER--

--THE SUN WOULD HAVE
EXPLODED! BLAH, BLAH!
I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND
WHY PEOPLE FIGHT WHEN
THERE'S NO MONEY
INVOLVED!

COME ON,
GRANNY, LET'S
GET YOU TO
YOUR CAVE.



DO
YOU THINK
MALAK
BOUGHT
IT?

I -- I DON'T
KNOW. THANKS --
I DIDN'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO.
BUT WHY --?



I REMEMBERED
SOMETHING. YOU
HELPED ME RUN, BUT YOU
ALSO GAVE ME TIME --
AND HELPED ME FACE
THE MUSIC WHEN I
WAS READY.

BACK
THERE WAS THE
ONLY WAY I COULD
SEE TO SEND MALAK
AWAY. IT'S JUST A
DELAY -- BUT IT'S
TIME.



HE WON'T
FORGET YOU,
JARAE. HE'LL BE
BACK. AND I DON'T
KNOW IF YOU REALLY
WANT TO BE WITH
HIM OR NOT.
BUT...

...WOULDN'T
YOU LIKE TO BE
FREE TO MAKE
THE CHOICE?



